

SHOOK, HARDY, MITCHELL & BACON - *Special Projects* - *Dr. Sterling*

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October 30, 1972

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*Ken OK'd
11/15
called Dave & advised
F.P.A.*

Re: Dr. Theodor D. Sterling

We have had two conferences with Dr. Sterling during the past several weeks and would like to generally bring you up-to-date on his activities and to submit a study proposal for your consideration.

Dr. Sterling has submitted manuscripts on air pollution and smoking to Science and Environment. He has also submitted a paper titled "A Critical Assessment of the Evidence on the Cigarette Smoking-Lung Cancer Relationship" to the American Journal of Public Health. This manuscript is similar to the paper he presented at the Smoking and Health Session of the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in December of 1971.

Dr. Sterling appeared on a program of the American Statistical Association in Montreal during August of this year and presented a paper entitled "The Effect of Self-Selection Factors in the Study of Smoking and Lung Cancer". He also expects to deliver a paper on air pollution and smoking at the annual AAAS meeting to be held in Washington, D. C., next December. He is presently working on a manuscript which deals

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with the role of the statistician in public health issues. This manuscript calls for a more critical review of statistical data before public policy is made based on interpretations of such data. He anticipates this manuscript's being published in the American Statistician. Another paper, on the importance of control groups to certain experiments, is also underway but Dr. Sterling does not presently have definite plans with respect to publication.

Dr. Sterling has expressed considerable interest in devising a study of urban and rural animals to determine whether or not the urban animals have more lung disease. He has talked with several scientists about this, including Dr. Herbert L. Ratcliffe, who was a consultant to the National Research Council Committee which wrote the report that was the subject of my October 2 letter to you.

Dr. Sterling remains convinced that more pollution-oriented research should be included in the industry's future plans. He has often expressed the belief that studies should be made of lung cancer rates in women who work in dusty occupations and of general overall smoking rates for persons who work in dusty environments. He uses the word "dust" to cover a myriad of industrial and occupational pollutants.

Dr. Sterling recently emphasized the importance of an article published in the July issue of the American Journal of Public Health. The article (enclosed), "Air Pollution, Climate, and Home Heating: Their Effects on U. S. Mortality Rates" by Lave and Seskin, concludes that "the type of fuel used for home heating is a major contributor to the air pollution level in the city." This article supports Sterling's conclusions in an earlier article ("The Incidence of Lung Cancer in the U. S. Since 1955 in Relation to the Etiology of the Disease", A.J.P.H., February 1972) that heating fuels may have played a much larger role than anyone suspected.

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Another area of interest in our discussions with Sterling has to do with the recently issued National Academy of Sciences' report, "Particulate Polycyclic Organic Matter". Sterling has expressed the opinion that "The NAS report on PPOM's may well become the focal point for discussion. It is the first official document to seriously consider the alternative antecedents of lung cancer"

We definitely would like to authorize Dr. Sterling to review and analyze the report. As a part of such a project Dr. Sterling intends to obtain the opinions and views of others. He has written us that, "I would like to draw in a number of principals into this review or at least seriously discuss it with them (including some statisticians who have remained on the sidelines so far but might become involved now that the PPOM report may have made the heat less intense)."

One person with whom he certainly would talk would be Dr. Wilhelm C. Hueper. You are all familiar with Dr. Hueper and I am enclosing one of his latest writings called "Lung Cancer and Smoking in Perspective", which appears in Lawyers' Medical Cyclopedia. I believe you will find this of ~~more than~~ usual interest.

Dr. Sterling advises that if he can presently be authorized to start on this project he could complete the work by sometime next February. He estimates the cost of the project to be approximately \$9,000.00. This amount includes funds that he could use in talking with others about the report.

We recommend authorization of the project, through CTR or otherwise if CTR elects not to administer it, in an amount

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of \$9,000.00. We feel this is an important project and should be supported.

Sincerely,

Bill Shinn

William W. Shinn

WWS:sh

Enc.

cc: Alexander Holtzman, Esq.
Lester Pollack, Esq.

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